1: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

to fifty miles from our last camp by the Jabal Tawil—we found all the pasture gone, consumed to the last blade by the locusts. It was only in the plain of Biyaz that we found a depression which was untouched and with plenty of forage. There we made camp under the shelter of a *wadi*.

The women and slaves unloaded the camels and at once proceeded to put up the tents. The tent-cloth is spread on the ground, looking like a long, black, hairy hide; the lines are drawn east and west, tent-pegs driven home with wooden mallets, and the long tent-poles, properly spaced, are inserted under the roof-strip. Then, by dint of lifting and pushing, up goes the structure; first one pole in place, then the next, and so on until the whole goat-hair "house" rests securely on its supports. Row after row of tents rose, casting long shadows as the last sun-rays gleamed on their peaked roofs.

I bought a weakly camel from my fellow-travellers, had it slaughtered and the meat distributed to all and sundry. The flesh-pots of Ishmael were soon steaming and the savour of them attracted a horde of hungry dogs. One of the tribesmen was to play host to myself, Faris, and a number of others. Out of the dark his troop of camels stole up silently, showing suddenly in the light of the fire as if they had come from nowhere, and lay down before his tent. It was comfortable and homely there by the fire, in the wide circle of men and beasts.

Our cook had transferred a turbid, muddy mess of old coffee grounds and water from a goatskin bag to a pot with a long spout, which he put on the hearth. Now the black, bitter brew foamed up again, and after it had

1: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

been properly skimmed, the cook poured a part into the smallest jug available and from this served his coffee a few drops at a time, a single stoneware cup making the round of the company. The mound of camel dung heaped by the women was glowing red, and everyone was on the tiptoe of expectation when Faris rose and went over to the women's side of the tent. A cheerful bustling sounded from it—supper ought to be about ready; and sure enough, there appeared a woman and a slave, carrying between them a huge platter piled high with meat, which they set down on the threshold. Faris shouted into the night, to call all stragglers who might be in the vicinity.

We grouped ourselves round this mountain of flesh. I saw in the flickering light wild-looking, hungry men squatting opposite me, with black plaits of hair showing under their white-and-red head-cloths, the tips of which were flung over the shoulders. They fell to with their fingers, tore the meat from the bones and devoured it in great gulps. Our host flung titbits to me across the platter. It was embellished with the camel's head split open, but without the brains. Only the women will eat them, for they are supposed to make men faint-hearted. The hearts of bustard and other fowl are also disdained by these gallant lords of the desert.

We lingered four days in this depression, as we had enough food and fuel. The camels scattered to graze in the surrounding country. The women, too, were busily employed in hoeing up the roots of the small shrubs and gathering their twigs, which they carried to camp on their backs in large bundles. Many of the women had

2:Mus:1 S-4, 5 (no date) 1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

CHAPTER V

FOOD

261 All the Rwala are familiar with hunger and fear it, since they know that it is difficult for the hungry to overcome those who have eaten their fill. They have a saying: "The attack of the sated on the hungry is very vile, *fatt aš-šabʿân ʿala-l-ǧêʿân fatten žûwi.*" But nobody can see hunger, and therefore nobody can deride a hungry man as easily as one who is naked or insufficiently clothed. If a man comes half-naked to his true friend, it grieves him, for either the man has been robbed or else he pays no heed to the dictates of decency; hence the saying: "Go hungry to your friend, but do not go naked to him; *it rafîžak ǧêʿân w-lâ taʾtîh ʿarijân.*"

261 771 The Rwala know that Heaven is the abode of God who looks after them and supplies them with food, while the human enemy, who begrudges them everything, inhabits the earth upon which we walk. A father often reminds his son: "He who provides thee with everything dwells in Heaven; he who hinders thee dwells on the earth upon which thou walkest; *razzâk bes-sema' w-al-ḥâsed bel-waṭaʿ.*" It is useless to be overanxious about the things for which all long. On every occasion Allâh cries out to man: "O my servant, thou hast desires and I have desires, but all thou canst do is to carry out the things that I desire; *jâ ʿabdi ent trîd w-ana-rîd w-lâ lak illa mâ-rîd.*" Man therefore comforts himself with the proverb: "I desire, but Allâh will nevertheless carry out what he desires; *ana-rîd w-allâh jaʿmal mâ jerîd.*"

261 577 609 Hunger forces a man to theft. To take from an enemy or a stranger all that he has is not a sin, but to steal anything from a neighbor or fellow tribesman is a sin, and Allâh does not bless the thing that He has forbidden, *mâ bârak allâh bel-ḥarâm.*

264 The Rwala eat regularly twice a day. Their main and most abundant meal is supper, *ʿaša.* They have this meal after sunset. Shortly before noon there is lunch, *ḍada'*, at which they merely drink milk or eat what is left of supper or a piece of bread from the previous day, *bâjet.* Only for im-

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

portant guests do they bake fresh bread and prepare some sort of meal. If a Rwejli has a piece of dry bread, *ḫomš*, and can soak it in water, he boasts of having eaten well. Breakfast is unknown to the Rwala. In order to loosen the spittle, *fekk ar-rîḳ*, they eat a grain of salt, a morsel of bread, or gulp down some milk. This is their usual breakfast, *ṣubûḥ* (*eṣṭebeḥ*, take thy breakfast). On long marches they can keep going with this breakfast until evening, because they have no luncheon. The Rwala know that they will eat only after sunset and are grateful to Allâh if he gives them a chance of eating their fill at least once a week. Often there is not even a cup of cold *leben*, sour milk, for supper. Suppers of this kind, at which only a little milk is drunk, are called *ṣabûḥ*.

MILK AND METHODS OF PROCURING IT

Milk is the main nourishment of the Rwala. In order to secure a supply of milk for a whole year they make use of various devices.

If a young camel is weak they kill it as soon as it is born, and for seven days, *samḥ leǰâl*, they do not milk, *jeṣarzûha*, the female camel, so that she loses her milk, *w-hi ṭrarez*. In this way she becomes strong and can carry loads. If they have insufficient milk, they gently stroke, *jemsaḥûha*, her udder morning and evening, and after a few days the milk flows again. If they have a sucking camel, they lead it to her; in order that she may let it suck, they draw her nostrils together with a rope, *jeḥazmû ḫašmaha bel-ʿaḳâl*, or thrust a long, strong needle, *maḫjaṭ*, through her nostrils. Thus they deceive the female camel, *jeẓîrûn ʿalejha ẓijâr*, who cannot smell the calf tied to her, becomes friendly with it, *tarâm*, and lets it have milk, *taderr*.

Sometimes they remove the newly-born calf, *ǧarraw laha*, before the female camel notices and smells it. Then they kill it, tie up the female camel, and fasten to her an older calf, which they smear with a little blood from the calf that has been killed. The female camel licks it, makes friends with it, *râmat*, and lets it suck. In this way one calf sucks two female camels. This method is called *ǧerâr*. Often they kill five and even seven young camels, and to all the female camels they bring the same calf, and all of them let it suck. This is called *muǧammaʿa*. The female camel which gives the least milk they

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

Saḥr is a piece of camel's fat spitted on a small stick and roasted on the fire. 252

Camel's fat is known as *šaḥm*; cut up and boiled into suet it is known as *maḥlû'* or *widač*. In the kettle in which the fat is thus rendered a sediment called *ḥalî'*, something like swards, remains on the bottom. The *widač* is poured into a leather bag, *ẓarf* (or *naḥw*), and kept for as long as three years. In the hot season the Rwala prefer it to butter because it is cool. Nobody sells camel's suet, except perhaps a very stingy person. *Widač* is a good remedy for boils and suppurating wounds. [752]

The best meat is obtained from a fat she-camel, *'adla*, between four and ten years old. The flesh of an older she-camel, especially a lean one, *helîme*, cannot be properly boiled. It always remains tough and has no taste. The flesh of young camels less than three months old, *ḥwâr*, has a bad effect on the stomach. 262 825

The Rwala also feed on blood. Only a bird's heart they throw away for fear of becoming as timid as the bird. "He has a bird's heart, *ḳalbeh ḳalb aṭ-ṭejr*," means: "He is easily frightened."

MEALS

Members of the family of the tent owner take their meals in the women's compartment. Food for guests is carried into the men's compartment, where sometimes their host sups with them together with his eldest son. 264 574

When supper is ready, the host gives the order: "Pour water for the men so that they can wash! *ṛasselû 'a-r-reǧâl*." A slave, a son, or a younger relative takes a *žedaḥ*, wooden vessel, with water, goes from man to man, and pours a few drops upon the contracted fingers of the right hand. If the master is waiting with his acquaintances for supper, he calls to his son, his daughter, or to a male or female slave: "Give us supper! *ḳalleṭ lena-l-'aša*." The person who brings the meal places it before him, saying: "Here is the supper, *hâhi-l-'aša*." If an esteemed guest is present, the host himself goes to fetch the supper, accompanies the sons or the slaves carrying the *ṣaḥn*, and places it either in front of the most esteemed guest or at the side of the fireplace. The host calls by name those who are to take supper first, *tafwît*. The person thus invited rises, goes to

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date) 1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

264 574 the dish, kneels on his left knee, sits on the left heel, extends his right sleeve, *jefasser 'an aḏ-ḏrâ'*, and waits for the host's invitation: "Call on (God's name)! May Allâh preserve your life! *sammû allâh jeḥajjîkom.*" With the words "In the name

[492]

FIG. 25

FIG. 26

FIGS. 25, 26—Pack camels, *al-maẓhûr*, on the march, carrying rolled-up tents and poles (see p. 76).

of Allâh" each one catches hold of the dish, rolls small pellets of *'ejš* or bread, throws one after another into his mouth, and swallows them without chewing. If there is a pile of meat in the middle of the dish, each one tries as quickly as possible to make a trench in the *'ejš* or bread till he reaches it. Nobody may clutch directly at the meat, as this is bad form. When the diner has worked his way underneath the heap, he may take whatever crumbles into his trench. A man who is esteemed must not gnaw the meat from the bone. He has to tear away the meat with the fingers of his right hand, without raising his hand from the dish. What he does not tear away he leaves on the bone, which he presses against the side of the hollow. Nobody is allowed to rise until all the men have finished eating supper from the same dish. Such a group of men having supper together is called *ḳalṭa*. When they have finished eating, they say: "May Allâh requite the hosts for this! *ḫalaf allâh 'ala-l-ma'âzîb.*" The host replies: "Health and good digestion! *ṣaḥḥa w-'âfije.*" Each one licks the fingers of his right hand, *jilḥas îdeh* (or *jedeh*), and goes to the side wall of the tent, against which he rubs one finger after the other, *jimḥaš jedeh*, and cleans his teeth, *jinḳaš*

snûneh. The host then arranges a second group, *ḳalṭat al-wasṭa*, and, when this one has eaten, he adds more food; if by now the meat is gone, he mixes the *'ejš* with *mraḳa* gravy and calls on a third group, known as *al-ḳalṭat al-mḥelijje*. What is left over, *ṛarîme*, is received by the poor children who stand round the tent.

To an unsatisfied eater they say: "Thou hast gnawed the head of a camel, the head of a wether, and a hare together with its head; thou hast eaten a canful of paste made of dates and flour, and still thou sayest that thou hast not supped; *râs w-rwejs w-arnab râseh beh w-žedaḥ bečîle w-tḳûl mâ ta'aššejt*."

COFFEE AND ITS PREPARATION

All food is prepared in the camp by the women in their compartment. In the men's compartment coffee only is made. At the command: "Blow up the fire and prepare coffee, *šibb an-nâr w-sawwi-l-ḳahwa*," a slave, the son, the wife, the daughter, or sometimes even the tent owner himself, strikes the spark, lays the smoldering tinder into a piece of dry *šîḥ*, whirls it round above his head until it bursts into flame, lays it under the fuel on the fireplace, and blows upon it until this also catches fire. Then the coffee maker lays beside the fireplace long coal tongs, *milḳâṭ*, and takes the coffeepots (Fig. 32) from a circular basket woven of straw or palm leaves.

The coffeepots are generally four in number. The largest one is called *maṭbâḥa* or *kumkum*. Into it the grounds from which coffee has been decocted are emptied for several days. A slave pours water on them and places the pot by the fire. The other three pots he rinses out, *ješarreb*, pours the contents into the largest one, polishes them with a duster made of camel's hair, and sets them on the right-hand side of the fireplace, where there already stands a copper water jug, *berîž*, as well as a *žedaḥ*, or cylindrical wooden vessel measuring about 20 centimeters in diameter and 6 centimeters in height and with a narrow edge. From the *žedaḥ* water is offered for drinking.

From a leather pouch, *ṣifen*, or from a small leather canister, *ḳarf* (pl., *ḳarâf*), the mistress of the tent takes a handful of coffee, *benn*, a slave puts it on a shallow iron pan with a long handle, upon which the coffee is roasted, *miḥmâse*, and holds it above the fire, continually stirring the

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

8. And, likewise, fill the pot into which cardamom, nutmeg,
And twenty fragrant stalks in the proper quantity are put.
4. Bring also a fat sheep, to hold which a caldron is put on the fire,
A sheep to be wrapped in a garment garnished with mouthfuls of grain.
5. Then with fat shine the mustaches of grave men,
Liberators of chattel-burdened camels found in the midst of fighting.
6. My comrades can parry well, their blows are not feints.
How many have already lost their heads through their deeds!
7. They consult not old women, nor are they engaged in selling butter;
They are not men who talk only of satisfying carnal passion.
8. O Lord! O Thou who causest plants to grow also for Druses!
Take not the silver to thyself, leaving the world nothing but worthless copper.
9. How many a calumny, causing pain when treasured up in the breast,
Will vanish, and yet it dwelt in the heart as if it were pure truth.

The reciter was Ǧwâd al-'Âni.

Verse 1. A short pipe, *sebîl*, often breaks at the elbow. If the peddler has no pipes for sale, the smoker provides for himself. The broken mouthpiece is replaced by a small thin bone which he fixes into the remnant of the pipe, tying it with leather and sewing it firmly together to prevent the smoke from escaping. A pipe thus repaired is called *bûz*. But the same name is given to the pipe bowl, while the small bone held in the mouth is called *'aẓm*, or *bizz*, or *bezz*. 2. *'Aẓm al-bûz* is the bone piece held in the mouth. *Al-mambûz* is a woman broad in the hips and shoulders and with a slender waist, *umm ar-rdûf w-al-ktûf šetâjâha mambûzât*. 4. *Muṣlâḥ* is a conscientious herdsman whose flock does not suffer from hunger, therefore *šât muṣlâḥen* signifies a fat sheep. *'Atel* is a poetical expression for a large kettle, or *židr*. *Markûz*, placed, because a kettle is placed on three stones over the fire. *Ḥabb al-lekejmi* is the dish of *'ejš* prepared from grains of wheat; the eater takes small bits, *loḳm*, in his fingers and wraps it around small pieces of meat. 6. *Hûz* means a jest, a feint in

574 sive or that he contradicts himself, he declares: "By Allâh! we do not trust thee. Say who knows thee! *W-allâh mâ ḥenna meṣaddežînak hât alli 'ârefk.*"

[609] If nobody is found in the camp to vouch for the newcomer, he must leave at once, either on foot or on his animal. The host fears that he may be a robber who will steal from him or his guests at night and then disappear. This caution [672] is due to the fact that the host is responsible for any deed his guest may commit while on his grounds.

A common guest addresses the chief with the title: "O thou long living! O thou who art protected from evil! *jâ ṭwîl al-'omr jâ mḥafûẓ.*"

Sometimes a guest arrives just when there is no flour, wheat, or *tummen* (a kind of rice) in the tent. The owner with his whole family may have been living for weeks on milk alone, but the guest must receive something better. In such a case the wife goes from tent to tent, begging: "We have received a guest and we are out of food. O friends, we have nothing to set before him; lend us something so that we can do our duty. *Henna mežâfir w-enzefna jâ rab' w-henna-kfarna min aṭ-ṭa'âm ekrezowna šien* [sic] *nesteter beh.*" The neighbors help her to the best of their ability — one lending a little flour, another some *tummen* or some butter, and there are also tents where she is told: "Come to us today and thou wilt get the supper thou needest for thy guest."

574 If the guest arrives in the forenoon, he gets both dinner
● 264 and supper, *ġada w-'aša*. The meals are brought either by the host himself or his son or are served by a slave, with the host urging: "Hasten to thy luck, O guest of the Most Gracious! Eat! May Allâh preserve thee!" A prominent guest either eats alone or invites the host or some chief who is present to eat with him.

A common guest eats with the others, the host, however, deciding the order of those who are to sit together. When the dish is already surrounded by six or eight persons and the host notices one more he wishes to invite, he asks: "If you can find a gap between you, invite also So-and-So! *en čân 'endakom ṭenijje 'azzemow flân.*"

"The place is large! Come hither, O So-and-So! *al-maṭraḥ wasî' ḳum ğâj jâ flân.*"

Coughing or sneezing during the meal is to be avoided. He who has finished eating licks his fingers clean, drops his

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

hand on his knees, and waits for the others to finish. The host urges him to eat and also bids the others to remain at the dish and keep on eating, but they answer: 574 264

"Thou hast not restricted us. May Allâh increase thy welfare! *Mâ kaṣṣart allâh ječaṭṭer ḫejrak,*" to which the host replies: "I wish you good digestion and much success! *hana' w-'awâfi.*"

The guests: "May Allâh preserve thee for more success! *meḥajjik allâh 'ala-l-mejsûr.*"

The host: "[And may he preserve you] to success and booty! *mejsûren ṛânemcu.*" Or: "May Allâh preserve you from the moment you leave us to the moment you reach your homes! *allâh meḥajjîkom min jowm mašejtom elja mâ lafejtom.*"

The guests: "And may Allâh expand thy heart with joy! *w-bak raḥḥab allâh.*"

If any one rides past the tent where the guests happen to be eating, the host calls to him: "O youth, direct thy steps hither! The food lies before thee! *jâ walad enṭaḥ ǧâj az-zâd bwağhak.*"

An invitation of this kind is considered by the rider as a favorable sign that he will succeed in what he has set out to accomplish. Therefore he does not stop but merely answers: "I am not inclined to eat!"

The host: "But think of thy welfare!"

He answers: "May Allâh increase thy welfare" and rides on joyfully.

A host who has killed an animal for his guest draws with its blood a long mark on both sides of the neck of the guest's camel.

When a guest of importance arrives at a Rwala camp, he takes lodgings with his closest acquaintance, where he also sups the first night and accepts invitations from others for the days following. This custom is called *dawrijje.* It is not done to spare the host but to honor the guest — for the host could be compensated for his outlay in some other way, if necessary. 574

A guest should not change his host without good reason. Should he think that he is a burden to his host or that he is neglected, *killet hefle,* and make a complaint to the host, he might be told: "Then be off and look for another host!" This, however, happens very seldom, even if the guest should stay in the tent five or six days at a stretch.

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date) 1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

539x 4. If I risk my vigor and that of my old she-camel,
Then, faith, I have not much in the world that I should
Hey! glory! mourn.

[833] Verse 1. *Mažẓa'* means, properly, the spot where sexual intercourse takes place. 2. The *ḥamûle* is larger than the *ahl*, and is almost like the *žebîle* (see above, p. 47). 3. *Debâjel*: ulcers or abscesses. Such growths in the stomach make eating unpleasant and interfere with digestion. The fear of thieves and assailants robs a man of his appetite and the pleasant sensation of digestion.

827
269

Jâ mâ ḳaṭa'na dûnehen min zerâže
tarmi beha ferž al-ǧwâzi 'ejâlaha
wa' hâj . . .

Oh, how many plains vast and scorched we had to cross
before we captured them,
Where even a stray gazelle which suffers not from
Hey! glory! thirst will miscarry.

Zerâže are vast, waterless plains. *Ǧwâzi* are gazelles which never taste water. *Ferž* means an animal which has become separated from the herd, has gone astray. Such a one will loose the fruit of its womb from exhaustion.

The Raiders' Home-coming

727 Once in the camp every man makes straight for his tent, driving or leading his booty. From behind the tents the women and girls watch them greeting their friends as they pass:

"Strength to thee! *ḳaw flân.*" Answer:
"O greeting to thee! *jâ hala.*"
"O Allâh, grant him life!" Answer:
"May Allâh grant life to thy dear ones!"
"This booty be thy consolation, *ṭalaḳ hal-fowd.*" Answer:
"For thy consolation, and mayst thou capture still more! *ṭalaḳ wa-tfid.*"

[431] Sometimes the raider is asked for a gift with these words: "Prove that thou esteemest me! *al-ḥazijje.*" If he answers: "Rejoice over this gift, *bešš behal-'aṭijje,*" the suppliant may be sure of receiving something.

727
574 Their relatives invite the raiders to stop for a meal with them. "Have it good for once, have it good, ye booty getters!

726 539ᵏ flank. *Dabbûs* is a heavy wooden staff, about 120 centimeters long. *Medâbis* (sing., *medbes*) are youths armed with such staves. They beat the enemy with the staves, pursue those who flee, and if they turn their mares in another direction it is only to save a comrade swept from his saddle. *Ḥarrafaw*: turned their mares about for a new attack, *taḥrîf*. *Ṭarîḥ* is a rider thrown from the saddle. He is usually seriously wounded and calls to his comrades to help him. It is considered dishonorable, a shame, *ʿajb*, to give a *ṭarîḥ* the finishing stroke.

539ᵏ

Jâ rabb jâ rabb ar-raḥûm
tarmi-l-ḥaja bidijârana
narmi-l-ʿaša lalli jaḥûm
laʿujûn ǧillen bikârana.

O Lord! our graciòus Lord!
Thou wilt pour forth a copious rain on our lands,
Whilst we shall pour forth a supper for the circling birds,
Before the eyes of our big she-camels.

Ḥaja are abundant rains which assure a luxuriant growth of annuals. If the latter cannot thrive, it is because there has been no *ḥaja*, and no affluence, *rabîʿ*, will follow. [619] *Dîre* means territory belonging to one tribe or subject to one emir. Thus Eben Saʿûd is obeyed by many different tribes, and their territories all form the *dîret eben saʿûd*. [264] The Rwala eat to satiety only once a day — in the evening — and therefore use the word *ʿaša*, meaning supper, to express a meal in general. *Jaḥûm*, it circles, is used of a white vulture with reddish wings and yellow beak. It accompanies the warriors on almost all their trips and flies above the battle ground untiringly. *Ǧill* are strong, big she-camels. The enemy tries to capture them, but their defenders come in time to repel the attack.

Habbî lana ḥbûb ar-rîḥ habbî lana
elja' mâ tekâmel ḫejlana.

Blow luck to us, O wave of the wind! blow,
Until our riders are assembled.

The first riders on reaching the attacked herds must, together with the herdsmen, repel the first attack of the enemy; therefore they appeal to the breeze to be favorable to them, for, if they have to fight against the wind which